

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 2, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

We respectfully write to request that the Department of Transportation (DOT) implement and enforce regulations prescribed by Congress to enhance the safety of millions who travel by commercial motorcoach.

On March 2, 2007, a charter bus carrying the baseball team of Bluffton University was involved in a fatal crash on Interstate 75 in Atlanta, Georgia. Tragically, seven individuals lost their lives that day. In the months after this tragedy, we introduced the bipartisan Motorcoach Enhanced Safety Act, which passed into law as part of Public Law 112-114, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21). Ten years after this horrible crash, travelers are still waiting for DOT to finalize other bus safety standards mandated in MAP-21.


We urge the Department to finalize the remaining motorcoach rules included in MAP-21. This includes Sections 32304, 32704, and 32703(b) of the law that require DOT to issue rules for improved roof strength, fire safety standards, rollover crash avoidance, anti-ejection measures including stronger windows, and updated standards for commercial driver's license (CDL) applicants. Most of these legislative directives remain outstanding, with no clear guidance on next steps.

Congress overwhelmingly supported action on these important safety standards, and we believe swift action by the Department will improve passenger safety and save lives. We would appreciate an update on the expected timeline for resolving and implementing these motorcoach safety standards.

We thank you for your service and look forward to working with you and your staff to finalize these critical safety standards.

Sincerely,


SHERROD BROWN
United States Senator


JOHN LEWIS
Member of Congress